Building Your Media Portfolio
Tips for B.A. (Media and Communications) Students

Most students understand that a degree alone will not make the difference in employment. Any degree promising otherwise is not being entirely honest. It is a mixture of what you know, how well you do, work experience, and your portfolio.

Because the BA (Media and Communications) degree involves an internship structured into the curriculum some students get confused about, a) how much work experience to do and b) how to go about developing their portfolio.

The degree cohort includes many talented students who already write regularly or work part time in media outlets. Some students wonder, what are reasonable expectations?

Here are some tips that address these common concerns?

**Keep copies of your work?** This is an obvious but golden tip, otherwise you won’t have a portfolio. Keep the URL links – but also importantly .pdf copies for when the links are archived.

**Don’t wait for your internship to do work experience.** You can do work experience and be covered by university insurance before your third year. To gain work experience insurance approval before you are enrolled in MECO 3671 Internship please fill out this form
http://sydney.edu.au/arts/media_communications/internships/students/insurance.shtml
So no need to wait. Our sense of reasonable expectations is try to get into one work experience attachment or publication a year.

In terms of publication, hit the campus magazines first, then branch out. By second or third year you may have published in your local newspaper. By fourth year you may have tried your hand at an opinion piece. The Internship itself often opens up a world of publishing for those interested in print media. Show your work to trusted friends and lecturers before hand.

In terms of work experience, this might be an attachment to your local community newspaper or a PR company; or a not for profit organization. The Department sometimes advertises opportunities as well. The diversity of experience can be important as it helps you work out what you are not interested in as much as what you like. Don’t dismiss on campus opportunities like working for the Arts Faculty Marketing unit, or the Galleries and Museums, or research centres such as the China Studies Centre, US Studies Centre etc..

**Think strategically about your assessments.**
Approach your learning in a purposeful way. Every assessment represents a chance to build up your portfolio. Be sure to make a personal copy of your video pieces and radio pieces along the way. If you get feedback on a piece that can improve it, re-edit it for your portfolio.

**Get involved with Salience, the Media and Communications Department magazine.**
The Department will soon be revamping this space
http://sydney.edu.au/arts/media_communications/salience/

Ask the MECO office about this.

**Get involved in the University of Sydney student union publications and events**
Meco students have traditionally had strong representation on the editorial board of Honi Soit as well as Directors of festivals such as Verge.

Contribute to Honi Soit
http://srcusyd.net.au/publications/honi-soit/
Contribute to *The Bull*

**Get involved in the campus societies**

MECOSOC-Media and communications Society
http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=31274167384

SURG-Sydney University Radio Group
http://www.surgfm.org/

The Radio Group in particular needs a strong base to get our radio studio on air as much as possible. There will be a need for lots of content/podcasts/radio features.

**Make use of the University of Sydney Careers Centre**

Keep an eye out for the Resume Rescue workshops and lectures aimed specifically towards Media students

**Make use of Social media**

Consider creating an online portfolio- using wordpress or blogspot to showcase/collate all your pieces of published work in one place – not only ore professional looking but shows your multi media skills.

*Some current and former students’ portfolios and blogs:*


http://www.jonnoseidler.com/

**Or if you are a Media and Communications Department International Internship Fellow**


It is worth being cautious around twitter and the dangers of presenting your professional identity in an unprofessional way.

**Towards the end of your degree**... Ask the department to borrow a camera and record some up to date pieces to camera.

Organise the work you have collected all through your degree into a suitable form.